Reading Response #13:

Folk tales

As I read and learned about Louisiana Creole culture, I began to gain a deeper understanding of the folk tale, *The Talking Eggs.* To start, I learned that many Creole people held a special status—upper-class, even aristocratic—in Louisiana in the early 1800s and then lost that status and wealth after the Civil War. Perhaps wishing for wealth and a better life is a common theme in Creole folktales and Creole culture. *The Talking Eggs* starts with Rose and her mother wishing they were rich and living in the city. Many Creole people had been wealthy and lived in urban areas, but ended up in poor farming areas. Thus, Rose and her mother’s dreams are fueled by the past experiences of the Creole people overall. In the end of the story, Blanche did move to the city to live the good life, accomplishing a dream of many Creole people.

My research led me to another even more interesting and significant characteristic of Creole people. They are known for being, “proudly unconventional characters.” What that means is that Creoles are often eccentric, odd, artsy, unusual and are particularly strong individuals. The old woman in *The Talking Eggs* fits this to an extreme. To begin with, she is unusual in that she can take off her head! Furthermore, her whole world is made up of strangeness: cows with two heads, multi-colored chickens, dancing rabbits, stew that cooks from almost nothing, and, of course, magical eggs!It seems to me this folk tale is trying to celebrate the unique nature of Creole people by exaggerating their oddness, as represented by the old woman in the story. When I first read the story, I didn’t realize the old woman was symbolic of Creole culture, I just thought it made for a funny and weird story. Now, I see that perhaps she was invented in this story because everyone in Creole Louisiana knows someone unique and eccentric, a little bit like her.